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Ann Hewitt

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

ANN FENWICK.

"The excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it."

"O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
"Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings,
"And thou, unblemish'd form of chastity."



NEWCASTLE :
EMERSON CHARNLEY, BIGG-MARKET.

1840.

Pr of Eschsch. Matthews 152 pr. 1/99



TO
MY DEARLY BELOVED WIFE,
THESE
RECOLLECTIONS
OF ONE
NEVER TO BE BY US FORGOTTEN,
ARE
MOST AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED.

*Must Longing be her
Love Farewell*

22
"As precious ~~gods~~ are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire;
So was she soon exhal'd, and vanish'd hence;
A short sweet odour, of a vast expense."

RECOLLECTIONS.

THE subject of the following recollections was born at the Shield Field, Newcastle upon Tyne, on the 11th day of May, 1815. From her infancy she enjoyed the mental culture which the fond affections of a tender mother could bestow on her first-born child. She had excellent capacity, and made considerable proficiency in the various branches of Education to which her attention was directed. At an early age she evinced a taste for music, and ultimately reduced the Piano to her absolute control. She understood the Philosophy of Language—was mistress of English Grammar, and although not disposed to the cultivation of French and Drawing, yet, to gratify the wishes of her parents, she pursued those elegant accomplishments in a manner which proved that, by steady application, she could have taken a creditable position in both of them. She was a good Chemist, partial to natural Philosophy, and de-

lighted to study the publications of Sir John Herschell, declaring that he was the clearest writer she had ever met with.

I at one time contemplated the idea of her undertaking the study of English Law, tracing it to its Saxon springs, and comparing its general principles with the volume of Inspiration, but through my inattention to her in this branch of knowledge, she did little more than overcome the first Commentary of Blackstone. To "Divine Philosophy" she was not indifferent, but well read in Dogmatic and Practical Theology. She was theoretically a Calvinist, a Millenarian, and a Baptist. On the greatly disputed point in the Baptist body, she symbolized with Robert Hall, and thought that close communion was as contrary to the Genius, as it was repugnant to the Spirit, of Christianity.

She had strong and acute feelings, but had acquired the control of them. She was reserved in her manner and avoided all approach to display—very few of the most intimate friends of her Family either knew her attainments or appreciated her worth. But she occasionally threw off her shyness, and exhibited the intellectual wealth of which she was possessed ; not long before her last illness, she chanced to sit at table with a clergyman of some literary distinction, whose urbanity and kindness found ready access to her heart—she entered freely into conversation with him on a

variety of topics, and on the breaking up of the party he stated to our kind Hostess, "That he had never enjoyed a more delightful evening: nor met with any young person of greater mental power, than Miss Fenwick."

Thus lived Ann Fenwick, the joy and admiration of her parents, possessing every thing that they could desire—save vital experimental Godliness—when He, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, by a way which they anticipated not, drew her to himself. The letter addressed to Mr. James, unfolds the process by which the great work was accomplished—and she adds one more to the multitude of happy beings to whom the labours of this distinguished minister of religion have been eminently useful. The three christian friends whose personal ministrations were most blessed to her, were the Rev. W. W. Caldecott, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, and since gathered to his people; William Rouse, Esq., of London; and the Rev. Charles Bathurst Woodman, not unworthy of his collateral descent from that glorions woman Lucy Hutchinson. Montgomery's beautiful Poetic Effusion, "At home in Heaven" ought not to be forgotten as an important means of enabling my beloved child to anticipate her own immortality.

After Ann left Newcastle, for Torquay, my mind was greatly distressed at the idea that all the

Religion which she possessed was barren intellectualism. In one of my letters to my venerable and most excellent friend, Mr. Prattman, of Barnard Castle, I made him acquainted with my distress. His reply was as striking as it was consolatory. I cannot but transcribe it.

"Barnard Castle, Dec. 19, 1838.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"We were all truly sorry to hear an unfavourable account of your daughter's health. It is well, nay, best, in such cases, to prepare for what is called the worst, yet perhaps your fears may not be realized. As in the case of Abraham, the Lord sometimes gives back what he has called for, when we shew a willingness to surrender it up to him. It is a great mercy that your beloved child is so well stored with Scriptural knowledge. She is prepared for its holy influence. The promise is, 'I will put my laws into their *mind*, and write them upon their *hearts*.' The first part he has graciously done, and he can as easily do the other. She will have many prayers and intercessions of saints offered up in her behalf, that the Lord will reveal his son in her as the hope of glory. Your prayers and theirs will ascend before the throne, and find acceptance, and secure, I trust, answers of grace and peace; for 'the effectual inwrought prayer of the righteous availeth much.' It is no

small proof of the loving kindness of God, when those who have been instructed in the truths of the Gospel, but have not yet given decided evidence of their saving influence, that he is pleased to afflict them at all ; and especially that he should give them warning of death, approaching in a slow and gradual manner. In this case messengers of mercy are sent before, to say ‘ the Lord is coming, meet him as thy Redeemer and thy God.’ And he is not only a God of Love, but ‘ He is Love ;’ and blessed are they that, believing this, rely on that cross of his dear son, by which he has reconciled the world unto himself, and receives with delight, every sinner that comes for salvation to him. May the Lord pour upon her a spirit of grace and supplication, and then all will be well, and ‘ you shall sorrow not as those who have no hope.’

“ I am, my dear friend,

“ Truly and affectionately your’s,

“ W. L. PRATTMAN.

“ John Fenwick, Esq., Solicitor,
Newcastle on Tyne.”

The promise so appropriately referred to by my excellent correspondent was literally fulfilled in the experience of my dear child, and to the God of all grace be the glory !

My beloved daughter finished her course in the

presence of her family, on the 11th April, 1839. Her mortal remains, in pious acquiescence with the divine sentence pronounced on the common father of mankind, we committed to the dust, but on her tomb we could raise the watch tower of faith, and *look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.*

J. F.

*Summer Hill Grove,
Newcastle upon Tyne, March 22, 1840.*

"Plymouth, April 18, 1839"

"MY DEAR MRS. FENWICK,

"Not having heard of you for so a long time, I was indeed exceedingly anxious about your dear child, so on *Thursday the 11th*, I posted a letter for you, addressed to Newcastle. I know not how it was, but for some days before, she was almost continually on my mind, and nothing but a fear, lest I should be intruding on domestic sorrow, prevented me from writing at once. This morning I sat thinking about her, and was much disappointed when the post brought no intelligence. In a few minutes a gentleman sent me the Newcastle paper, which revealed all, and in the course of the morning your kind letter reached

me in a parcel from Torquay. There are times when one feels well nigh incapacitated either to write or to converse, and such is my case now.—My dear friend, I can only offer you the sympathy of a deeply-wounded spirit; for I am sure that I am not singular in having felt more than a common interest in one on whom none could gaze without interest, and with whom it was impossible to converse without recognizing one of the few who rise above the level of the unfeeling multitude. Your's is indeed a loss of no ordinary kind, and doubtless your sufferings are intense. Would that it were in my power to administer even the least consolation to poor Ann's "dear" mother, as she used beautifully to speak of you—never shall I forget my last interview with that sweet girl. Do you remember that I remained with her at her request, during your absence, for some considerable time? Dr. Lucas called, and, to save her from exhaustion, I undertook all the conversation. When he had left, she expressed her gratitude for the kindness of friends, and added,—“But I long to return to Newcastle, for however kind friends may be, they are not like relations.”—Having lost a beloved mother, I was rather agitated by the remark, and said ‘oh that *is* true. I can sympathise with you,’ and then referred to my lamented parent. To this she replied with an em-

phasis peculiarly her own, and which I shall never forget—"You must not forget that which you have been telling me—God is your Father, and he can and will repair every loss—yes I have a *dear* mother, a *very dear* mother. I loved her of course before I came here, but never knew her worth till lately—no not half her worth—you can scarcely imagine her kindness—poor dear, she is looking very ill, do you not think so? She is wearing herself out for me." She then shed a tear, but wiped it rapidly away, then paused for a moment, and looked upwards—that tear—it was the tear of a Daughter's affection—that look—oh, did it not invoke a Father's benediction on one she so tenderly loved? The scene was to me an overpowering one—dear girl, I think I see her now on that sofa, and listen to that voice, which I shall never hear again, inviting me to an exercise for which my agitated spirit but ill fitted me. I knelt down and commended her to God, and commended you to God; and oh that I could convey to the other members of the circle, the interest she expressed when their salvation was referred to—but here I must pause—there is much of that conversation which I well remember, which I love to recal, and to you would be interesting, but which just now I am not equal to transcribe. Oh my dear Mrs. Fenwick, how delighted should I be to

run in, and in my feeble way, endeavour to console the mother and the loved ones of my departed young sister in Jesus—but this must not, cannot be—hundreds of miles separate me from the scene of your sorrow and the resting place of your now glorified child. I do hope, however, yet to visit the North either in June or July—in which case I will secure a few hours at Newcastle, that I may see you again, and visit the spot where her ashes repose. Peace to those ashes !—Jesus is watching them—not a particle shall be lost—oh no—they will rise again in a form more glorious ‘ where the bitterness of death is past.’

“ It must be a source of unutterable satisfaction that poor Annie found peace in Christ before her departure. We cannot doubt her happiness—oh no !—she is much happier than we are, and though ’t is painful to you, and, may I add, to myself, to know that we can never meet her again here, still it is delightful to be assured that her *last* sufferings have ended—nothing remains for her but happiness, pure, unsullied, uninterrupted happiness—death is conquered—that crisis which we all contemplate with solemnity she has met—it is all over—absent from the body she is present with the Lord. And here I am reminded of the pleasure she expressed when I read to her the eighth chapter to the Romans. I remember placing the strings

which were in that little Testament at the place, and begging that when distance prevented us from uniting again in prayer, and Satan brought her mind into a state of perplexity and doubt, she would plead those glorious truths before God, and rest on the love of Jesus, and the faithfulness of Jesus, in which the Apostle so beautifully triumphs. To do so was her parting promise ; and now with you I would offer thanksgiving to the Lord, who so mercifully supported her through all her affliction. Be comforted then, dear friend, your dear Annie is sleeping sweetly in Jesus. A little longer and you will meet her again—and oh imagine the thrill of extacy which shall be your's when, rising from the valley, she will appear to welcome you to her own happy home ! Heaven has in one sense become richer for you—the chain which binds you to earth has been weakened, that which unites you to the celestial world has received another link—your associations with a blessed immortality have become tenderer and more intimate ; and then as to the other members of your circle, for whose souls you cherish anxiety, which only a mother can appreciate, may I remind you that the prayers of the dear young believer are before God on their behalf. In the book of remembrance those prayers are all recorded—take then, dear friend, this instance of the Lord's goodness to poor Annie as a

pledge of his gracious intention to the rest of your beloved children. It is my sincere prayer, though unknown to your circle, that they all may follow the dear departed as she followed Christ, so that when with them the storms of life shall have ended,

“ You may rejoice, no wanderer lost,

“ A family in heaven.”

“ It will give me no ordinary pleasure to receive an account of her last hours, and any particulars with which you may favour me. I am aware that such a request may appear unreasonable, but did you know one half the interest I have felt in your departed child, I am sure you will so far oblige me— Was there a funeral sermon? Good Mr. March gave me a fir apple which the dear girl brought home, which I shall preserve. I have not heard particulars about Miss Hancombe or Mr. Caldecott, but both will very soon, I think, join the departed. And now, dear friend, let me hope to hear from you in reference to this interesting subject. Accept my sympathizing regards, and believe me,

“ Your’s, in Christian affection,

“ C. BATHURST WOODMAN.

“ Mrs. Fenwick, Summer-hill Grove,
Newcastle on Tyne.”

" Newcastle upon Tyne, March 21, 1840.

" MY DEAR SIR,

" It is some years since I had the pleasure of interchanging a letter with you, but an occasion very interesting to my feelings, and which must be gratifying to your's, induces me to break the silence which we have so long indulged.

" Much pains had been taken to impress on the mind of my eldest daughter the truths and influences of Religion, and as far as the doctrines of Grace went, not without effect, for these she knew better than most young persons of her years. But as yet, I was not privileged to witness that great moral change which the important words of inspiration "born again" intimates. The great stumbling block in her way was the inconsistencies in professors of religion. She dreaded the idea of being a Christian in name only. And in vain did I urge that the hypocrisy of others, to use the harshest term, was no excuse for her insincerity. Thus she continued until she entered on her 24th year, when alarming symptoms of pulmonary affection exhibited themselves. We availed ourselves of the best medical skill which this town afforded, but without any material effect. She, in the buoyancy of hope peculiar to young people, thought a visit to the South would prove beneficial.

“ And in the autumn of 1838, she and her mother left Newcastle, for the purpose of wintering in Devonshire. They reached Torquay, but the change of climate effected no change in her disease. It was but too apparent that the time was drawing nigh when she “ must die.” At Torquay she met with some Christian people, who had journeyed thither for the same object as she had done, and their sympathy and conversation seemed to have the happiest effect on her spirit and temper. She had a copy of your “ Anxious Inquirer” put into her hands ; she attended most minutely to the directions which you have given as to the mode of reading that book ; and although I cannot say that to it alone she was indebted for the spiritual change which she underwent, for she had much conversation with religious people, and many a fervent prayer for her eternal welfare offered up, yet certainly the “ Anxious Inquirer” had a great and important part in that ministry which the spirit of God effectually wrought in her behalf. She lived to return home, and for some weeks to exhibit in her own family that wonderful change which she had undergone in Devonshire, and then she breathed forth her sanctified spirit to the God and Saviour who gave it.

“ She was dear to me by ten thousand ties, but during her illness my great anxiety was for her

eternal interests. I hesitated not to say that could I see a work of grace on her heart, the bitterness of death would, as to her, be overpast. Our heavenly Father gave me to see that work; and when the Saviour came into his garden to gather this lily, I could only exclaim, "the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

"That your ministry by the living voice, and by the numerous books which you have published, may continue to be eminently useful, is the earnest prayer of your's,

"My dear Sir,

"Very affectionately and sincerely,

"JOHN FENWICK.

"The Rev. J. A. James, Birmingham."

"*Edgbaston, April 2, 1840.*

"MY DEAR SIR,

* * * * *

"Be comforted under your loss, by the assured hope of her eternal gain. Your's is an incalculably less affliction than that of the Parent who mourns a living child estranged from God and going, it may be, amidst the greatest earthly prosperity, to everlasting woe; a moment is coming which will repair the ravages of death and restore

this dear object of your affection in the bloom of unfading beauty and the vigour of immortal youth, and then you will together be for ever with the Lord. Wherefore do ye, her parents, comfort one another with these words. * * *

“ I remain,

“ Your’s, most truly,

“ J. A. JAMES.

“ John Fenwick, Esq. Newcastle on Tyne.”

SONNET
ON THE
DEATH OF ANN FENWICK.

“ But our flower was in flushing
“ When blighting was nearest.”

Yes, they have laid thee in the quiet earth,
And drooping friends are clustered round thy tomb,
From quivering lips has died the voice of mirth,
And pale-brow'd mourners weep thy early doom—
For thou hast faded, as the rainbow's ray
Melts from the storm-cloud, or the spring's first flower,
That bloomed in beauty through its short-lived day,
Droops in the chilling blast, at evening hour.
We saw thee passing from us, and the heart
Strove with its tendril-love, to keep thee here.
Thine was a nobler, and a better part,
As whispering spirits called thee to the sphere
Where *all* is pure. And shall the tear-drop start
When rays of roseate hope this dark horizon cheer?

April 18, 1839.



